

Librarianship Students' E-Specialized Information Seeking Habits

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Abstract — The paper presents the habits of seeking e-specialized information conducted by the librarianship students at a Mekong Delta University in Vietnam. Based on Charles Duhigg's habitual concept and habit loop [3], a quantitative study using surveys was undertaken with 127 Library and Information students. Findings show that students' e-specialized information seeking habits are related to frequency, information type, format, searching techniques and skills. Five factors influencing students' e-specialized information seeking habits are identified. They are intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, searching criteria, perceptions and barriers. Practical solutions are also presented to provide librarianship students with insights into alternative ways of exploiting e-specialized information resources for the good sake of their academic studies and future jobs.

Keywords — Electronic information, e-information, e-specialized information, information-seeking habits, library and information science.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, along with the dramatic development of information technology and the Internet, e-information sources are becoming a more and more popular and diversified tool that serves human needs in several different disciplines. In particular, it is e-specialized information sources that are evaluated as the high academic ones in providing the users, especially students with opportunities to advance their academia, research, and career prospects. However, up to now, studies on e-specialized information seeking habits still remain scarce for librarianship students—potential information specialists who support the users in seeking information needed for their own fields of study. Therefore, this research fills the gap and examines factors influencing their e-information seeking habits.

II. METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1) Methodology

The study was conducted based on the concept of habit and habit loop of Duhigg [3]. Habit is defined as an individual's actions repeated regularly. Specifically, habits are made up of behaviors that people deliberately choose to do, then even though they stop thinking about making decisions, those behaviors continue to happen. The habitual loop model consists of three key elements, which are cue, routine and reward. First, the 'cue' step will have the effect of putting the brain into automatic state and selecting habits to use. Next, people will generate activities such as physical, mental or emotional activities. Finally, the reward can be the feeling of satisfaction, praise, or bonus. The connection between 'cue' and 'reward' helps the brain develop a sense of expectation. When repeated, the "cue, routine, and reward" cycle will be automatically occurred and a habit is consequently formed. Furthermore, every habit can be changed in the condition of mastering the mechanism of the habit loop. It can be understood that one of the most common and effective ways to change habits is keeping 'cue' and 'reward' unchanged, and changing 'routine' only. This habit loop underpinned the study to provide librarianship students with insights into how to form e-specialized information seeking habits for their academic studies and future jobs.

2) Literature Review

Research has indicated that information-seeking habits of users come from their majors and job requirements. In particular, lecturers interested in scientific research considered information-seeking habits as their motivation [2], [10]. Other studies share similar views on this trend. For example, a study by Niemand on information-seeking habits of students in Information Management revealed that their motivation is to deal with scientific research, particularly problem-solving assignments, career and updated knowledge search [14].

Besides, lecturers, colleagues and librarians are keen on seeking daily news. Campbell indicated that about eighty percents of the Architecture lecturers prioritized the needs for their scientific research activities [2]. Teachers were encouraged to motivate students to learn through lectures and seek potential sources of information pertinent to their major and research purposes [17].

With regard to information searching frequency, most users have weekly searching habits. In particular, the weekly information search of the lecturers in Education sector is quite high [16]. Only a small number of users believe that Engineering lecturers never search for information [4].

Currently, students are likely to be interested in seeking and using information available on Google instead of other academic sources. For example, more than 90% students of Physics and Astronomy in their research used to search for information from Google, while less than 10% of them searched from an electronic database and articles from Google Scholar, and no one searched for information from library websites. Students are still not aware of specialized academic information sources. They therefore have not tended to use these valuable information resources [1].

Regarding the electronic document format, majority of users often have the habits of finding full-text documents. For example, students of Ho Chi Minh City University of Pedagogy used full-text articles with the average mean scores for performance 3.33, while summary and the document catalog were 2.67 and 2.50 out of 5 respectively [12]. This author further explained that full-text articles which were easily accessed by advanced search provide users with the entire content.

For searching terms, most users have the habits of basic search by using keyword or related terms rather than advanced search. For instance, 91% of the 103 Physics and Astronomy students were good at basic search using free keywords [1]. Similarly, HCMC Pedagogical University students preferred 'keyword' access with the average mean scores for performance 3.47 [12]. This author also asserted that students used 'keyword' search very often and this searching habit plays a very important role in facilitating their studies.

In content searching, most of the users tend to have the habits of looking at the reference list at the end of the articles. In particular, Engel, 95% of 903 the respondents in engineering faculty have the habit of such searching [4]. In addition, students from Ho Chi Minh City University of Pedagogy have the habits of browsing the main content, then they photocopy or print it out to read later with the average mean scores for performance 3.23. The author also strongly believed that students will save much time in looking up electronic documents by using this technique [12].

Considering the information assessing criteria, users often have the habits of examining the author's credibility. For instance, 85% of their 114 Health Science lecturers are interested in the author's reliability. In addition, they paid little concern on the quick access or familiarity of the information source. More specifically, only 7% of the 538 lecturers in the education sector care about quick retrieval and 6% of them are interested in the familiarity of the information resources [10].

Users have different feelings after getting the needed information. For instance, most Information and Knowledge Management students usually feel satisfied with the information accessed or retrieved from the Internet, especially on Google [14]. Meanwhile, a few lecturers of Architecture show their feeling of satisfaction from this source.

Studies have shown that students face many difficulties in e-information seeking. For example, Information and Knowledge Management students found that they had a hard time finding suitable sources of information. Of the 289 students who responded, more than 50% of them said they conduct self-search for information, so they didn't have the skills and experiences to look for suitable source [14]. For the Health Science lecturers, the common problem is that library resources are not sufficient to meet their needs [10]. About 20% of 676 Information Technology (IT) engineers encounter with language barrier in searching for information [15].

III. METHODS

The study was conducted using quantitative research method. 189 librarianship students (sophomore to senior) were invited to respond to the printed and online surveys which had been lasted for four weeks. First-

year students were not involved in the survey because they took general subjects and were not familiar with specialized subjects. Also, these students' e-specialized information is limited. In total, 127 students (Table 1) from a university completed the questionnaire. These samples fit to Krejcie and Morgan's sample size suggestion [11]. In addition, the primary data collected through the survey was designed using the 5-point Likert scale. With the printed and online surveys, respondents could choose their favorite one. About 75% of 127 respondents ($n = 95$) took the printed and 25% of them preferred online survey. Specifically, sophomore accounted for the highest proportion (38.6%; $n = 49$). The percentage of male students is only 20% ($n = 26$). Besides, over 50% ($n = 64$) students did not yet possess English certificates. Regarding IT capacity, students with basic IT degree accounted for 61.4% ($n = 78$). Data were processed by using SPSS software. Cronbach's Alpha test, descriptive statistical analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and multivariate regression analysis were used to find the answers for the research questions.

Table 1: Research Population

	N	%
Samples		
Senior	43	33.8
Junior	35	27.6
Sophomore	49	38.6
Gender		
Male	26	20
Female	101	80
English capacities		
Without certificate	64	50.4
Pre-intermediate	53	41.7
Intermediate	3	2.4
Others	7	5.5
IT capacities		
Without certificate	46	36.2
Basic	78	61.4
Advance	3	2.4
Total	127	

Source: Data from the survey in 2019

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

1) Searching Habits of Librarianship Students on E-Specialized Information

Based on Duhigg's habitual concept [3], the information seeking habits of librarianship students were examined by frequency, first thought of information source, types, formats, searching techniques and steps. The average value is assessed with five scales proposed by Hoang and Chu [9]: Strongly disagree (1.00-1.80); Disagree (1.81-2.60); Neutral (2.61-3.40); Agree (3.41-4.20) and Strongly Agree (4.21-5.00).

Table 2: Searching Habits of Librarianship Students on E-Specialized Information

		(N = 127)	%	Mean
Frequency	Weekly	76	59.8	3.46
First thought of information source	Google	71	55.9	4.37
Type of e-specialized information	Information on Google	113	88.9	4.41
Format	Full text	44	34.6	4.02
Searching terms	Title	108	85	4.20
	Key word	105	82.4	4.20
Content search	Abstract view	97	76.4	3.88

Source: Data from the survey in 2019

Data from Table 2 shows that majority of students have the habits of looking for information weekly with 59.8% ($n = 76$) reaching the average mean scores for agreement 3.46. In addition, final year students have the highest weekly search habits with 65.1% ($n = 28$) (Table 3). Furthermore, the study found that there was a discrepancy of searching frequencies between male and female students. In addition, about 55.9 percents of librarianship students ($n = 71$) think that Google is their first thought of information source with the average mean scores for agreement 4.37 (Table 2). More particularly, junior students always think of Google first with 94.3% ($n = 33$) (Table 3).

Table 3: Searching Habit by Student Level

		Senior (N = 43)		Junior (N = 35)		Sophomore (N = 49)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
frequency	Weekly	28	65.1	19	54.3	29	59.1
First thought of information source	Google	35	81.4	33	94.3	42	85.7
Type of e-specialized information	Information on Google	37	86.1	34	97.2	42	85.7

Format	Full text	39	90.7	22	62.8	31	63.3
Searching terms	Title	38	88.4	31	88.5	39	79.5
	Key word	41	95.4	35	100	29	59.2
	Boolean	21	48.9	12	34.3	9	18.4
Content search	Abstract view	37	86.1	28	80	32	65.3

Source: Data from the survey in 2019

Regarding the type of e-specialized information, nearly 90% of participating students (88.9%; $n = 113$) have the habits of seeking information on Google, the average mean scores for agreement 4.41 out of 5 (Table 2). This finding is fit into Brindesi, Monopoli and Kapidakis's research that the percentage of students having the habits of searching on Google is 96.1% ($n = 99$) [1]. The study showed certain differences between junior and sophomore as well as senior. This means that more juniors prefer information on Google than the sophomore and senior with 97.2%, 86.1% and 85.7% respectively (Table 3). More interesting, study found that if students have the higher level of English capacities, they will have more habits of using a variety of information sources. In addition, about one-third of librarianship students agreed with the habit of finding documents in full text (34.6%; $n = 44$) and the average mean scores for agreement 4.02 (Table 2). Similarly, the final year students earn more habits of using full-text (90.7%; $n = 39$) than the others (Table 3).

In terms of searching terms, titles and keywords are the students' favours with 85% ($n = 108$) and 82.4% ($n = 105$) respectively and reaching to the same mean agreement values of 4.20 (Table 2). In this case, junior and senior students have the same habits of using keywords and titles compared to sophomores'. Similarly, a few second year students have the habits of searching with Boolean operators (18.4%; $n = 9$) (Table 3). Quite interestingly, the higher the students with IT capacities are, the more variety of information they used.

For content searching, 76.4 percents of librarianship students ($n = 97$) preferred abstract view, reaching the average mean scores for performance 3.88 (Table 2). In particular, the final year students (86.1%; $n = 37$) and the third year students (80%; $n = 28$) have good habits of abstract views (Table 3).

2) *Impacting factors on the librarianship students' e-specialized information seeking habits*

To explore the factors affecting the librarianship students' e-specialized information seeking habits, the study used Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) in SPSS. EFA analysis is a statistical method used to shrink and reduce data. It is often aimed at simplifying an initial set of complex variables into a set of smaller variables in the form of factors. In this study, five groups of impacting factors with 28 variables were identified to find out if they influenced on the librarianship students' searching habits (Figure 1).

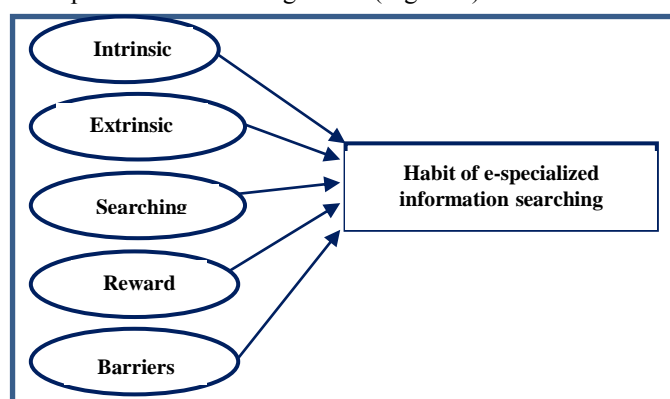


Figure 1: Observed Model of Impacting Factors

The requirements for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) were firstly tested and satisfied. In particular, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient = 0.858 shows that the set of observed variables meets the reliability with $0.6 \leq \text{Cronbach's Alpha} \leq 0.95$. Second, the number of measurement variables in the five factor groups is greater than 3, which satisfies the requirement suggested by Habing [6]. Then the number of samples collected was 127, which exceeded the expectation because it required a minimum of 50 samples and ideally 100 samples as suggested by Hair and his colleagues [8]. Fourth, the test result of KMO coefficient = 0.732 (Table 4), which satisfies the condition of $0.5 \leq \text{KMO} \leq 1$. Barlett's test has Sig value. = 0.000 < 0.05, proving that the factor analysis model is suitable [9]. Fifth, the Eigenvalue criterion = 1.571 > 1 and there are 5 factors extracted. Total

Variance Explained = 63.955% > 50% indicates that the 5 factors included in the analysis explain 63.955% of data variability [5]. Finally, the loading factor > 0.5 shows that the EFA model has practical significance [7].

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.732
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1173.531
	df	231
	Sig.	.000

The results of factor analysis with rotation matrix (2 times) show that all of these five groups of factors have an impact on post-graduate learning needs. However, out of the 28 observed variables, only 22 ones were influential (Table 5&6).

Table 5: Impacting Factor Groups and Observed Variables (2nd Matrix)

Table 3: Impacting Factor Groups and Observed variables (2 – Matrix)				
No	Groups of factors	Observed variables	Code	Quantity
1	Intrinsic motivation (IM)	Self updating of knowledge	IM1	5
		Examination and test preparation	IM2	
		Assignment	IM3	
		Scientific research passion	IM4	
		Carreer development	IM5	
2	Extrinsic motivation (EM)	Easy searching source on Internet	EM2	3
		Teacher's requirement	EM4	
		Available e-resources at the library	EM5	
3	Searching criteria (SC)	Available resources/easy use	SC1	5
		Accurate inforation/high quality	SC2	
		Quick retrieval	SC3	
		Reliable author	SC5	
		Updated information	SC6	
4	Reward (RE)	Satisfied with variety of information on Internet	RE1	5
		Assignment done/Problem solved	RE3	
		Useful source for librarianship	RE4	
		Keep on searching e-information	RE5	
		Introduce these valuable source for friends	RE6	
5	Barrier (BA)	Poor searching skills and techniques	BA1	4
		Language barrier	BA2	
		Lack of information literacy	BA3	
		Lack of library electronic resources	BA4	
Total				22

Source: Data from the survey in 2019

Table 6: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
RE1	.831				
RE3	.825				
RE6	.788				
RE4	.783				
RE5	.602				
IM3		.793			
IM2		.788			
IM1		.756			
IM4		.734			
IM5		.714			
SC1			.808		
SC5			.789		
SC3			.779		
SC2			.740		
SC6			.688		
BA3				.854	
BA2				.821	
BA1				.753	
BA4				.719	
EM2					.871
EM4					.770
EM5					.748

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Source: Data from the survey in 2019

Table 7: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.644 ^a	.414	.390	.64250	2.023

a. Predictors: (Constant), BA, SC, RE, IM, EM

b. Dependent Variable: Searching habit (SH)

In order to determine the influence level of factors on students' e-specialized information seeking habits, multivariate regression analysis was carried out. Multivariate regression method is a method of estimating a single regression model with one or more independent variables. When the regression model consists of many dependent variables, the method of estimating this model is called Multivariate Multiple regression [8]. In other words, multivariate regression analysis is a feature of SPSS that helps identify factors that contribute a lot / little / or not to the change of independent variables.

In Table 7, the coefficient of determination of R Square is 0.644, showing that the relationship between the factors is quite strong. At the same time, the Adjusted R Square is 0.390 < R Square, showing that the independent variable does not explain further for the dependent variable [13] and more than 60% of the searching habits is explained by 5 independent groups of variables BA, SC, RE, IM, EM.

The regression results were analyzed based on the VIF variance coefficient to determine the influence of factor groups on students' e-specialized information seeking habits. Data from Table 8 shows that all factor groups are greater than zero, indicating the variables are positively impacted. This means when these variables are changed in a positive direction, the value of each factor group increases. At the same time, no collinearity phenomenon has occurred. However, the third group of impacting factors are not analysed and used because sig. = .854 is not statistical significance (sig. > .05).

Table 8: Multivariate Multiple Regression

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.681	.501		-1.360	.177		
	IM	.252	.068	.268	3.716	.000	.930	1.076
	EM	.227	.062	.274	3.692	.000	.879	1.138
	SC	.014	.079	.013	.184	.854	.972	1.029
	RE	.373	.094	.282	3.964	.000	.955	1.047
	BA	.296	.084	.253	3.531	.001	.940	1.064

a. Dependent Variable: SH

Source: Data from the survey in 2019

The results of multivariate regression analysis thus identified 4 groups of observed factors in which the extrinsic motivation (EM) has the strongest and most influence on the information searching habit with VIF = 1.138 and sig. = 000. This group consists of easy searching sources from the Internet, teachers' requirements and the available e-resources in the library. This finding is fit into Campbell's research that extrinsic motivation has a great influence on the technical lecturers' searching activities, in the condition of Internet and their colleagues' supports [2].

The second group of impacting factors is intrinsic motivation (IM) with VIF = 1,076 and sig. = 000. This group includes updating knowledge, examination and test preparation, assignment requirement, scientific research passion and the desire of career development. This finding is in line with studies by Niemand and Inman and his colleagues. These authors claimed that the searching activity of the users is mainly derived from the needs of students to complete their assignments [14], [10].

Barrier (BA) is considered as the third group of impacting factors on the information searching habit with VIF = 1.064 and sig. = 001. Students faced unavoidable difficulties in searching for e-specialized information. This group of barriers consists of the observed variables such as poor literacy information skills, language barrier, lack of searching guidelines and lack of information sources in the library. Previous studies have also mentioned this problem. Specifically, students have poor information searching skills since majority of students study how to seek for information by themselves [14]. This finding proves that students need more practical trainings on information literacy. In addition, students should pay more attention in training so as to have good implementations.

The final group of influence factors is the reward (RE) with VIF = 1,047 and sig. = 000. This group is related to the feeling whenever needed information is found. It consists of the satisfactory with the available resources on the Internet, assignment solving / facing problems, recognition of useful information source for the major, keeping on searching for e-information and recommending these sources to their friends. Maintaining

and creating a satisfied feeling after searching will help students create good habits when looking for e-specialized information.

3) Possible Solutions to Change and Form Librarianship Students' Good Searching Habits on E-Specialized Information

Table 9: Participants' Suggestions of How to Change Bad Searching Habits

	N	%	Mean
Looking for e-specialized information from library database instead of Google	86	67.8	3.78
Looking for e-specialized information from Google Scholar	84	66.2	3.81
Using free e-database	77	60.7	3.74
Using open source	82	64.5	3.83
Looking for the free articles in ResearchGate	74	58.2	3.69

Source: Data from the survey in 2019

Data from Table 9 shows that in order to change and form good searching habits, most librarianship students think that they should use open source with 64.5% (n = 82), the average mean scores for agreement 3.83. Meanwhile, the percentage of students voting in using ResearchGate was the lowest one with 58.2% (n = 74).

Table 10: Librarianship Students' Suggestions on Establishing Good Searching Habits

	N	%	Mean
Lecturers should introduce e-specialized information resources for students	111	87.4	4.17
E-specialized information resources should frequently updated in the Website/Facebook of the Library Department	101	79.5	4.04
Forum of e-specialized information resources	87	68.5	3.83
Library should conduct more information literacy courses	107	84.2	4.10
Academic Club should conduct more seminars of e-specialized information resources	86	67.7	3.80
Motivation librarianship students' passion on scientific research	85	66.9	3.83

Source: Data from the survey in 2019

Majority of the librarianship students suggest that lecturers should recommend useful sources of e-specialized information (87.4%; n = 111), with the average mean scores for agreement 4.17. In addition, there is no difference on this suggestion among students from different levels. However, few students (67.7%; n = 86) concur with the idea that the Academic Club should regularly organize seminars to introduce the sources of e-information with the average mean scores for agreement 3.80 (Table 10).

V. CONCLUSIONS

Findings from the current study indicate that librarianship students have weekly e-specialized information seeking habits. Google is the first and most favorable source of information that students considered. It was found that five factors influencing the students' searching habits include extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, searching criteria, rewards and barriers. In particular, extrinsic motivation as the most influential factor entails easy-to-find resources from the Internet, teachers' requirements and available e-resources in the library. In light of these findings, there are some implications for library leaders. First, subscriptions of electronic academic resources should be made available to the users. Teachers and students are given an opportunity to discuss with library staff to find out their information needs and interests. Library users are encouraged to have training workshops or seminars on information literacy for the quality of the sources obtained from the Internet. Information technology and advanced searching skills for career and academic development are also needed. Moreover, teachers should consider different types of searching assignments presented to students for the sake of efficient information-seeking habits in the long run. Qualitative research concerning students' perceptions about e-specialized information seeking habits is a potential way for further investigation.

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